



## UPPER NIOBRARA WHITE NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT

**Board of Directors' Meeting  
November 14, 2013**

In accordance with LB 325, Eighty-fourth Legislature, First Session (1975), the Upper Niobrara White Natural Resources District held a public meeting at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday November 14, 2013, at the UNWNRD office in Chadron, NE. An agenda for this meeting to be considered at such date, time and place was kept continually current and was available in the NRD office. Seven days prior to the meeting, the agenda was mailed to each member of the Board of Directors and other interested and affected persons. Notice of the meeting was given to the public by publishing a legal notice in the Chadron Record and Alliance Times Herald on Wednesday, November 6, 2013.

### **Open Meeting Law Act**

Secretary/Treasurer, John Burke, pointed out the Open Meeting Law Act that is displayed on the wall.

### **Roll Call & Introduction of Guests**

Secretary /Treasurer, John Burke, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and roll call was taken with the following directors present:

Scott Berndt  
John Burke  
Larry Teahon  
Curtis Roth

Jim Lees  
Dave Carlson  
Tod Dorshorst  
Absent:

Steve Sandberg  
Rich Zochol  
Dave Kadlecek

Others present:

Pat O'Brien, NRD General Manger  
Kody Schwager, NRD Resources Technician  
Haley Anders, NRD Resources Technician  
Jessyca Hovendick, NRD Resource Technician  
Travis Nitsch, NRD Resources Coordinator

Sheri Daniels, NRD Water Resources Manager  
Rachael Downs, NRD Office Manager  
Shelley Steffl, NGPC  
Dixie Lees  
Todd Filipi, Pheasants Forever

### **Emergency Agenda Additions**

Pat requested to move Executive Session before Other Old or New Business.

**NRCS**  
**Robin Foulk**

Robin passed out a report on the current number of applications for cost share for livestock lost from storm atlas. Cost share is available per animal unit utilizing monies to haul animal, bury animal or transport to rendering facility. They are accepting applications even if burial/rendering actions have already taken place. Burials have to meet depth specifications of pit and number of cattle in pit. Third party verification is required for number of cattle lost.

They are currently working on 11 EQIP applications with a total of 1,075 cows, calves and sheep that were lost.

Pat thanked Robin for the efforts of NRCS working quickly towards recovery after coming out of the government shutdown.

**Nebraska Forest Service**  
**Fred McCartney**

Fred and Doak are currently working on a storm damage Field Day. At present, they are trying to get vendors together to provide demonstrations on alternative methods for dealing with the tree branches. They would like to set up a form of grant money and protocol if there is a storm like Atlas again.

The small boiler at the college is being repaired. Fred discussed the expansion at the college and how there may be a need to upgrade or add additional boilers. Current issues are where the needed additional boiler/boiler house should be located.

**Pheasants Forever- Corners for Wildlife**  
**Todd Filipi**

Todd is the Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist for Pheasants Forever based out of Scottsbluff. He passed out the program guidelines for Corners for Wildlife and gave an update on changes in contracts and new grants available. The most recent grant the program has received is through NET offering incentives to landowners for use of pivot corners for wildlife reserves.

Changes proposed to the NRD contract is an increase in the shrub donation from 400 to around 500. This increase is due to recent research done showing larger shrub plantings offer better cover for the birds. The landowner is responsible for planting and laying barrier. Todd recommends not using barrier as this will provide a more woody area for the birds.

The current NRD policy for Corners of Wildlife is to provide the 400 shrubs and planting. With the requested increase in shrubs, the overall increase will be around \$300.

Tod Dorshorst moved to approve the increase of shrubs donated to the Corners for Wildlife contract; Dave Carlson seconded the motion. Roll call: (7) ayes, (0) nays and (3) absent – Steve Sandberg, Rich Zochol and Dave Kadlecek.

**General Manager**  
**Pat O'Brien**

Pat added the following to his written report:

- Director Kadlecek and Lynn are in Lincoln at the LB517 Water Task Force meetings. The biggest issues continue to be taxing alternatives to provide funding for projects and organizational changes. There has been discussion to shrink the Natural Resource Commission. Director Kadlecek is currently voicing to maintain, even expand, the commission for better representation.

Regular Board of Directors' Meeting  
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- Pat touched on the issues concerning the Papio-Missouri River NRD and Director Japp's letters to editors. Director Japp has been projecting negative opinions about the NRD's position on sediment control. Pat asked staff to be aware of Director Japp's articles circulating and to let him know if anyone sees them in local papers. Director Roth added that any reported statements will be addressed and refuted by NARD.

**Assistant Manager  
Lynn Webster**

Lynn was absent from the meeting.

**Water Resources Manager  
Sheri Daniels**

Sheri added the following to her written:

- There is a Soil Health Workshop on Thursday November 21 at Chadron State College from 5:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. if anyone was interested in going. Both Sheri and Kody are planning to attend.
- Sheri also added there were 183 poster entries from three different schools in the area for the UNWNRD poster contest. There will be a press-release and pictures for the winners. Sheri will present the students with their prize money next week.
- The Christmas Party has been moved from December 19<sup>th</sup> to December 12<sup>th</sup> at the Ranch House in Crawford.

**Resources Coordinator  
Travis Nitsch**

Travis added the following to his written report:

- An initial order has been placed through Bessey Nursery for 45,000 trees. Currently we have orders for 7,000-8,000 trees. Travis expects orders to pick up after harvest season.

**Resources Technician  
Haley Anders**

Haley added the following to her written report:

- There are about 100 meters left to read in Box Butte County. Haley expects they will be done with Box Butte by next week and then will move to other areas.

**Resources Technician  
Kody Schwager**

Kody added the following to his written report:

- Kody has been reading meters on the eastern end of Box Butte and into Sheridan County.
- Kody and Travis have been working on fixing the old PRIDE office for the new Nebraska Forest Service employee, Mike Doherty, expected to be here next week.
- There will also be additional construction to open another office for a NE Game and Parks employee.

## **Approval of Consent Agenda**

Curtis Roth moved to approve the Consent Agenda; Tod Dorshorst seconded the motion. Roll call: (7) ayes, (0) nays and (3) absent – Steve Sandberg, Rich Zochol and Dave Kadlecek.

## **Agency Reports**

### **Nebraska Association of Resources District Curtis Roth**

Director Roth reported the following:

- NARD approved funding for Ag. Day on the Hill for \$1,000 and Nebraska Ag. Youth Institute for \$3,000.
- The NE Department of Agriculture is producing a new publication to promote Nebraska Agriculture. These are mainly directed towards reading material in public locations. The Foundation approved a third page advertisement for the annual publication for \$2,480.
- The NE Department of Agriculture and University of NE are working on a 'Nebraska Building' at the state fairgrounds for \$5 million. A \$25,000 donation was requested from the Foundation. The request was deferred to more discussion in January. Dean Edson of NARD would like to submit a request so each individual NRD could donate \$1000 and the NARD would donate \$2000. This would raise the requested \$25,000.
- The NARD declined to fund the Nebraska Water leaders and Nebraska Lead Program. The Nebraska Lead Program scholarship was denied due to the desire to appropriate monies to sponsor the program in another manner where NRD's could promote their efforts versus a scholarship only reaching out to one person.
- The Foundation received a small refund from a lawsuit settlement amounting in about \$1,700-\$1,800 which will be distributed into the general NARD fund.
- The Sediment Control Act is currently being drafted into legislation to later be introduced on the floor this session.
- There have been financial issues with the Envirothon, and it was decided annual dues of \$500 would not be given until the issues were resolved.
- January 28<sup>th</sup>-January 29<sup>th</sup> is Legislative Conference in Lincoln. There are rooms blocked at the Embassy and reservations should be made promptly. Pat and Rachael will take care of registrations and reservations.
- June 8<sup>th</sup> and June 9<sup>th</sup> will be the tour of Republican Basin and a tour of the NCORPE Project where four NRD's purchased 115 pivots south of North Platte.
- The Risk Pool and Insurance has maintained well even with the new federal changes. The NRD's current health care program meets the requirements under new federal law. Each employee will be receiving a ten page document explaining what is covered under NRD insurance.
- Because of new health care laws NRD cannot force an employee to continue with company insurance. However, an employee can only opt out of company insurance during open enrollment or change of status and the NRD is not required to pay their premium or compensate them in any way.

### **Nebraska Department of Natural Resources Dave Kadlecek**

Director Kadlecek was absent from the meeting.

### **Water Committee Report Tod Dorshorst**

Director Dorshorst reported on the following:

- It has been decided Sub-Area 2 will remain as is and not be divided into a new sub-area.
- There will be a Citizen's Advisory Meeting at Country Kitchen in Chadron December 18<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.

## **Operating/Personnel/Policy**

Pat reported that the interviews for sub-district 1 have been postponed due to one candidate being out of town. There are three candidates to be interviewed and all three letters of interest were included in the director's board packets. They have tentatively moved to December 10<sup>th</sup> at 10:00, 10:30 and 11:00 a.m. with hopes the committee will have a recommendation by the December 12<sup>th</sup> board meeting.

### **Executive Session**

Tod Dorshorst moved to approve to go into executive session at 11:10 a.m.; Dave Carlson seconded the motion. Roll Call: (7) ayes, (0) nays and (3) absent – Steve Sandberg, Rich Zochol and Dave Kadlecek.

Dave Carlson moved to approve to end executive session at 11:40 a.m.; Jim Lees seconded the motion. Roll Call: (7) ayes, (0) nays and (3) absent – Steve Sandberg, Rich Zochol and Dave Kadlecek.

Tod Dorshorst moved to approve to join the Niobrara Basin Inter-Local; Curtis Roth seconded the motion. Roll Call: (7) ayes, (0) nays and (3) absent – Steve Sandberg, Rich Zochol and Dave Kadlecek.

### **Old or New Business**

Pat commented that because of LB517 meetings being cancelled, the December board meeting can now be moved back to December 12<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 p.m. at the Ranch House in Crawford. Sheri is currently negotiating prices for the dinner. Kristy Dietrich will have prepared the audit, staff will present the annual review and the board will have a recommendation for vacancy candidate.

Dave Carlson moved to approve moving the December board meeting to December 12<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 pm.; Scott Berndt seconded the motion. Roll Call: (7) ayes, (0) nays and (3) absent – Steve Sandberg, Rich Zochol and Dave Kadlecek.

Director Burke welcomed Director Lees back.

Pat called the Walgren Lake closing to attention. Currently Walgren Lake is being cleaned up and maintained by the Friends of Walgren Lake Committee. They are looking for partners to help keep the lake open in the future and need a public entity to accept the community if Nebraska Game and Parks want to turn over responsibility. Operating/Personnel/Policy Committee will discuss Walgren Lake options and present ideas to the board.

### **Excused Absences**

Tod Dorshorst moved to excuse Steve Sandberg, Rich Zochol and Dave Kadlecek; Larry Teahon seconded the motion. Roll Call: (7) ayes, (0) nays and (3) absent – Steve Sandberg, Rich Zochol and Dave Kadlecek.

### **Public Comment**

No public comment.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

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Jim Lees, Chairman of the Board

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Patrick O'Brien, General Manager

Date Signed \_\_\_\_\_